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THE  
RANDOM HOUSE  
DICTIONARY  
OF THE  
ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE

Second Edition

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Unabridged

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*Dedicated to the memory of  
Jess Stein*

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word for happiness of an especially fortunate or intense kind: to wish a young couple felicity in life. —Ant. 1. misery.

**hap-py** (hap/ē), *adj.* *-pl-er, -pl-est*. 1. delighted, pleased, or glad, as over a particular thing: to be happy to see a person. 2. characterized by or indicative of pleasure, contentment, or joy: a happy mood; a happy frame of mind. 3. favored by fortune; fortunate or lucky: a happy, fruitful land. 4. apt or felicitous, as actions, utterances, or ideas. 5. obsessed by or quick to use the item indicated (usually used in combination): a trigger-happy gangster. *Everybody is gadget-happy these days.* [1300-50; ME; see HAP- + -y]

*Syn.* 1. joyous, joyful, blithe, cheerful, merry, contented, gay, blissful, satisfied. 3. favorable, propitious; successful, prosperous. See fortunate. 4. appropriate, fitting, opportune, pertinent. —Ant. 1. sad.

**hap-py dust**, *Slang*. cocaine. [1920-25]

**hap-py-go-lucky** (hap/ē gō luk/ē), *adj.* trusting cheerfully to luck; happily unworried or unconcerned. [1665-75]

—*Syn.* carefree, heedless, blithe, light-hearted, insouciant.

**hap-py hour**, a cocktail hour or longer period at a bar, during which drinks are served at reduced prices or with free snacks: happy hour from 5 to 7 p.m. [1965-70]

**hap-py hunt/ing ground**, 1. the North American Indian heaven, conceived of as a paradise of hunting and feasting for warriors and hunters. 2. a place where one finds in abundance that which one needs or desires, or where one may pursue an activity without restriction: *New England attics are happy hunting grounds for antique collectors.* [1830-40, Amer.]

**Hap-py Val/ley-Goose Bay**, a twin town in SE Labrador in Newfoundland, E Canada, consisting of an air base, Goose Bay, and its adjacent residential town of Happy Valley; used as a fuel stop by some transatlantic airplanes. 8075.

**hap-py war/rior**, 1. a person who is undiscouraged by difficulties or opposition. 2. (cap.) a nickname of Alfred E. Smith. [1800-10]

**Haps-burg** (haps/būrg; Ger. haps/bōrk/), *n.* a German princely family, prominent since the 13th century, that has furnished sovereigns to the Holy Roman Empire, Austria, Spain, etc. Also, Habsburg.

**hap-ten** (hap/ten), *n.* Immunol. a substance having a single antigenic determinant that can react with a previously existing antibody but cannot stimulate more antibody production unless combined with other molecules; a partial antigen. Also, hap-tene (hap/ten). [1920-25; < Gk hapt(ein) to grasp + G -en -en]

**hap-ter-on** (hap/ta rōn), *n.* *pl. -ter-a (-tār ē)*. Biol. a structure by which a fungus, aquatic plant, or algae colony attaches to an object; a holdfast. [1890-95; appar. a pseudo-Gk deriv. of Gk hapt(ein) to grasp and -ter agentive suffix]

**hap-tics** (hap/tiks), *n.* (used with a singular *u*) the branch of psychology that investigates cutaneous sense data. [1890-95; hap-tic < Gk haptikós able to grasp or perceive, equiv. to hapt(ein) to grasp, sense, perceive + -tikos -tic; see -ics] —hap/tic, hap/ti-cal, *adj.*

**hap-tom-e-ter** (hap/ tom/ ē tar), *n.* a mechanical device for measuring the sense of touch. [*<* Gk hapt(ein) to sense, touch, grasp + -ō- + -meter]

**ha-pu-u** (hā pōō/ō), *n.* a Hawaiian tree fern, *Cibotium splendens*, the cut trunks of which are used in horticulture as pots and planters. [*<* Hawaiian hapu/ū]

**Har-a-hai** (hā rā/ ē han/), *n.* a town in SE Louisiana. 11,384.

**ha-ra-ki-ri** (hār/ ē kēr/ ē, har/ ē-), *n.* 1. Also called seppuku, ceremonial suicide by ripping open the abdomen with a dagger or knife: formerly practiced in Japan by members of the warrior class when disgraced or sentenced to death. 2. suicide or any suicidal action; a self-destructive act: political hara-ki-ri. Also, har-ki-ri. [1855-60; < Japn. equiv. to hara belly (earlier fara < para) + kiri cut]

**ha-ram** (hā ram/ ē, har/ ē-), *n.* harem.

**ha-rangue** (hā rang/ ē), *n.* *pl. -rangued, -ranguing*. —*n.* 1. a scolding or a long or intense verbal attack; diatribe. 2. a long, passionate, and vehement speech, esp. one delivered before a public gathering. 3. any long, pompous speech or writing of a tediously hortatory or didactic nature; sermonizing lecture or discourse. —*v.t.* 4. to address in a harangue. —*v.i.* 5. to deliver a harangue. [1530-40; (*n.*) < MF harangue < It ar(r)inga speech, oration, *n.* deriv. of ar(r)ingare to speak in public, *v.* deriv. of aringo public square < Goth \*hriiggs rīnca; (*v.*) < MF haranguer < It ar(r)ingare]

**Ha-rap-pa** (hā rap/ ē), *n.* 1. a village in Pakistan: site of successive cities of the Indus valley civilization. 2. a Bronze Age culture that flourished in the Indus valley.

**Ha-rap-pān** (hā rap/ ēn), *adj.* of or pertaining to Harappa, esp. the Bronze Age culture of the Indus valley civilization. [HARAP(A) + -AN]

**Ha-rar** (hār/ or), *n.* a city in E Ethiopia. 58,000. Also, Harrar.

**Ha-rare** (hā rār/ ē), *n.* a city in and the capital of Zimbabwe, in the NE part. 675,000. Formerly, Salisbury.

**ha-rass** (hā ras/ ē, har/ ē), *v.t.* 1. to disturb persistently; torment, as with troubles or cares; bother continually; pester; persecute. 2. to trouble by repeated attacks, incursions, etc., as in war or hostilities; harry; raid. [1610-20; < F MF harasser to harry, harass, *v.* deriv. of harace, harache (in phrase courre à la harace pursue), equiv. to hare interjection used to urge hunting]

dogs on (< Franksish \*hara here, from this side; cf. OHG hera, G her, MD hare) + -asse aug. or pejorative suffix < L -āceus] —ha-rass-a-ble, *adj.* —ha-rass/er, *n.* —ha-rass/ing-ly, *adv.* —ha-rass/ment, *n.*

—*Syn.* 1. badger, vex, plague, hector, torture. See worry. 2. molest.

—*Pronunciation.* HARASS, a 17th century French borrowing, has traditionally been pronounced (har/ās), with stress on the first syllable. A newer pronunciation, (he ras/), has developed in North American (but not British) English. While this newer pronunciation is sometimes criticized by older educated speakers, it has become the more common one in the U.S., especially among younger educated speakers, some of whom have only minimal familiarity with the older form.

**Har-bin** (hār/bīn/), *n.* Pinyin. a city in and the capital of Heilongjiang province, in NE China. 2,000,000. Formerly, Pinkiang.

**har-bin-ger** (hār/bīn jər), *n.* 1. a person who goes ahead and makes known the approach of another; herald. 2. anything that foreshadows a future event; omen; sign: Frost is a harbinger of winter. 3. a person sent in advance of troops, a royal train, etc., to provide or secure lodgings and other accommodations. —*v.t.* 4. to act as harbinger to; herald the coming of. [1125-75; late ME herberger, nasalized var. of ME herberge, dissimilated var. of OF herberg(h)ere host, equiv. to herberg(h)er to shelter (< Gmc; see HARBER) + -ere -er-]

—*Syn.* 2. herald, forerunner, precursor, portent, indication.

**har-bin-ger-of-spring** (hār/bīn jər əv spring/), *n.* *pl.* har-bin-gers-of-spring, a North American umbelliferous herb, *Erigenia bulbosa*, having white flowers that bloom early in the spring. [1865-70]

**Har-bo-na** (hār bō/ nā), *n.* one of the seven eunuchs who served in the court of King Ahasuerus. Esther 1:10.

**har-bor** (hār/bər), *n.* 1. a part of a body of water along the shore deep enough for anchoring a ship and so situated with respect to coastal features, whether natural or artificial, as to provide protection from winds, waves, and currents. 2. such a body of water having docks or port facilities. 3. any place of water having docks or port facilities. 4. a harbor for tired travelers. —*v.t.* 4. to give shelter to; offer refuge to: They harbored the refugees who streamed across the borders. 5. to conceal; hide: to harbor fugitives. 6. to keep or hold in the mind; maintain; entertain: to harbor suspicion. 7. to house or contain. 8. to shelter (a vessel), as in a harbor. —*v.i.* 9. (of a vessel) to take shelter in a harbor. Also, esp. Brit., har-bour. [bef. 1150; ME herber-*u*, herberge, OE here-berc lodgings, quarters (here army + (gel)berg refuge); c. G herberge] —har/bor-er, *n.* —har/bor-less, *adj.* —har/bor-ous, *adj.*

—*Syn.* 1. HARBOR, HAVEN, port indicate a shelter for ships. A HARBOR may be natural or artificially constructed or improved: a fine harbor on the eastern coast. A HAVEN is usually a natural harbor that can be utilized by ships as a place of safety; the word is common in literary use: a haven in time of storm; a haven of refuge. A PORT is a HARBOR viewed esp. in its commercial relations, though it is frequently applied in the meaning of HARBOR or HAVEN also: a thriving port; any old port in a storm. 3. asylum, sanctuary, retreat. 4. protect, lodge. 6. See cherish.

**har-bor-age** (hār/bər ij), *n.* 1. shelter for vessels, as that provided by a harbor. 2. any shelter or lodging. 3. a place of shelter. [1560-70; HARBOR + -AGE]

**har-bor mas/ter**, an official who supervises operations in a harbor area and administers its rules. [1760-70]

**har-bor seal**, a small, spotted seal, *Phoca vitulina*, of the Atlantic coasts of North America and Europe and the Pacific coast of northern North America. [1760-70]

**har-bor-side** (hār/bər sid/), *adj.* 1. bordering a harbor. —*adv.* 2. in, to, or near the area bordering a harbor. [1945-50; HARBOR + SIDE]

**har-bour** (hār/bər), *n.* *u.t.* *u.i.* Chiefly Brit. harbor. —*Usage.* See -or.

**hard** (hård), *adj.* *-er, -est, adv.* *-er, -est, n.* —*adj.* 1. not soft; solid and firm to the touch; unyielding to pressure and impenetrable or almost impenetrable. 2. firmly formed; tight: a hard knot. 3. difficult to do or accomplish; fatiguing; troublesome: a hard task. 4. difficult or troublesome with respect to an action, situation, person, etc.: hard to please; a hard time. 5. difficult to deal with, manage, control, overcome, or understand: a hard problem. 6. involving a great deal of effort, energy, or persistence: hard labor; hard study. 7. performing or carrying on work with great effort, energy, or persistence: a hard worker. 8. vigorous or violent in force; severe: a hard rain; a hard fall. 9. bad; unendurable; unbearable: hard luck. 10. oppressive; harsh; rough: hard treatment. 11. austere; severe: a hard winter; the hard times of the Great Depression. 12. harsh or severe in dealing with others: a hard master. 13. difficult to explain away; undeniable: hard facts. 14. that can be verified; factual, as distinguished from speculation or hearsay: hard information. 15. harsh or unfriendly; resentful; severe; bitter: hard feelings; hard words. 16. of stern judgment or close examination; searching: a hard look. 17. lacking delicacy or softness; not blurred or diffused; clear and distinct; sharp; harsh: a hard line; a hard, bright light; hard features; a hard face. 18. (of a photograph) contrasty. 19. severe or rigorous in terms: a hard bargain. 20. sternly realistic; dispassionate; un sentimental: a hard, practical man; a hard view of life. 21. incorrigible; disreputable; tough: a hard character. 22. Scot. and North Eng. niggardly; stingy. 23. in coins or paper money as distinguished from checks, securities, promissory notes, or other negotiable instruments. 24. (of paper money or a monetary system) supported by sufficient gold reserves and easily convertible into the currency of a foreign nation. 25. (of money) scarce or available at high interest rates: a hard loan. 26. denoting assets with intrinsic value, as gold, silver, or diamonds. 27. (of alcoholic bev-

erages) a. containing more than 22.5 percent alcohol by volume, as whiskey and brandy as opposed to beer and wine. b. strong because of fermentation; intoxicating: hard cider. 28. (of wine) tasting excessively of tannin. 29. (of an illicit narcotic or drug) known to be physically addictive, as opium, morphine, or cocaine. 30. (of water) containing mineral salts that interfere with the action of soap. 31. (of bread and baked goods) a. having a firm, crisp crust or texture: hard rolls. b. stale or tough. 32. (of a fabric) having relatively little nap; smooth: Silk is a harder fabric than wool or cotton. 33. (of the landing of a rocket or space vehicle) executed without decelerating: a hard landing on the moon. Cf. soft (def. 28). 34. (of a missile base) equipped to launch missiles from underground silos. 35. (of a missile) capable of being launched from an underground silo. 36. Mil. being underground and strongly protected from nuclear bombardment. 37. Agric. noting wheats with high gluten content, milled for a bread flour as contrasted with pastry flour. 38. Phonetics. a. fortis. b. (of c and g) pronounced as (k) in come and (g) in go, rather than as in cent, cello, suspicion, gem, or beige. c. (of consonants in Slavic languages) not palatalized. Cf. soft (def. 26). 39. (in the making of rope) noting a lay having a considerable angle to the axis of the rope; short. 40. Physics. (of a beam of particles or photons) having relatively high energy: hard x-rays. Cf. soft (def. 29). 41. (of the penis) erect. 42. hard of hearing. See hearing-impaired. 43. hard up, Informal. a. urgently in need of money. b. feeling a lack or need: The country is hard up for technicians and doctors.

—*adv.* 44. with great exertion; with vigor or violence; strenuously: to work hard; to try hard. 45. earnestly, intently, or critically: to look hard at a thing. 46. harshly or severely. 47. so as to be solid, tight, or firm: frozen hard. 48. with strong force or impact: She tripped and came down hard on her back. 49. in a deeply affected manner; with genuine sorrow or remorse: She took it very hard when they told her of his death. 50. closely; immediately: Failure and defeat seemed hard at hand. The decision to ban students from the concerts followed hard on the heels of the riot. 51. to an unreasonable or extreme degree; excessively; immoderately: He's hitting the bottle pretty hard. 52. Naut. closely, fully, or to the extreme limit: hard aport; hard alee. 53. be hard on, to deal harshly with; be stern: You are being too hard on him. 54. hard by, in close proximity to; near: The house is hard by the river. 55. hard put, in great perplexity or difficulty; at a loss: We were hard put to finish the examination in one hour. —*n.* 56. Naut. a firm or paved beach or slope convenient for hauling vessels out of the water. 57. Brit. a. a firm or solid beach or foreshore. b. a firm landing, jetty, or road across or adjoining the foreshore. 58. Brit. Slang. See hard labor. [bef. 900; ME OE hard; c. D hard; G hart, ON harthr, Goth hardus; akin to Gk kratys strong, Ionic dial. krátos strength (cf. -cracy)]

—*Syn.* 1. inflexible, rigid, compressed, compact, dense, resisting, adamant, flinty. See firm. 3. toilsome, burdensome, wearisome, exhausting. HARD, DIFFICULT both describe something resistant to one's efforts or one's endurance. HARD is the general word: hard times; It was hard to endure the severe weather. DIFFICULT means not easy, and particularly denotes that which requires special effort or skill: a difficult task. 5. complex, complicated, perplexing, puzzling, intricate, knotty, tough. 6. arduous, onerous, laborious. 8. stormy, tempestuous. 10. severe, rigorous, grinding, cruel, merciless, unsparring. 12. stern, austere, strict, exacting, relentless, obdurate, adamant; unyielding, unyielding. HARD, CALLOUS, UNFEELING, UNSYMPATHETIC imply a lack of interest in, feeling for, or sympathy with others. HARD implies insensibility, either natural or acquired, so that the plight of others makes no impression on one: a hard taskmaster. CALLOUS may mean the same or that one is himself or herself insensitive to hurt as the result of continued repression and indifference: a callous answer; callous to criticism. UNFEELING implies natural inability to feel with and for others: an unfeeling and thoughtless remark. UNSYMPATHETIC implies an indifference that precludes pity, compassion, or the like: unsympathetic toward distress. 13. incontrovertible. —Ant. 1. soft. 3-6. easy.

**hard-and-fast** (hård/ ən/ əst/), *adj.* strongly binding; not to be set aside or violated: hard-and-fast rules. [1865-70] —hard-and-fast/ness, *n.*

—*Syn.* fixed, precise, inflexible, inviolable, rigorous, unambiguous.

**har-dang-er** (hār dang/ ar), *n.* embroidery openwork having elaborate symmetrical designs created by blocks of satin stitches within which threads of the embroidery fabric are removed. [1880-85; after Hardanger, an area in SW Norway where such embroidery was orig. produced]

**hard-ass** (hård/ əs/), *n.* Slang (vulgar). a person who follows rules and regulations meticulously and enforces them without exceptions. Also, hard/ass/.

**hard-as-set** (hård/ əs/ et/), *adj.* denoting an asset with intrinsic value: diamonds and other hard-asset commodities.

**hard-back** (hård/ bæk/), *n.* *adj.* hardcover. [1740-50; HARD + BACK]

**hard-ball** (hård/ bōl/), *n.* 1. baseball, as distinguished from softball. 2. play hardball, to act or work aggressively, competitively, or ruthlessly, as in business or politics. —*adj.* 3. tough or ruthless: He wasn't ready for the hardball politics of Washington. 4. outspoken, challenging, or difficult: Reporters asked the president some hardball questions. [1825-35; HARD + BALL]

**hard-bill** (hård/ bil/), *n.* Ornith. a seed-eating bird.

**hard-bit-ten** (hård/ bit/ en), *adj.* 1. tough; stubborn. 2. conditioned by battle or struggle: a hard-bitten army. 3. grim or severe in judgment or attitude: a hard-bitten old teacher. 4. hard-boiled (def. 2, 3). [1775-85]

**hard-board** (hård/ bōrd/), *n.* a material made from wood fibers compressed into sheets, having many household and industrial uses. [1925-30; HARD + BOARD]

*ORIGIN ETYMOLOGY KEY:* < derived or borrowed from; > whence; b. blend of, blended; c. cognate with; cf. compare, derivative; equiv. equivalent; imit. imitative; obl. oblique; r. re-; rans. a stem; ap. spelling, apellid; resp. respelling, respelled; trans. translation; ? origin unknown; \* unattested; † probably earlier than. See the full key inside the front cover.